***Hellgate High School – Principal Advisory Committee***

**Monthly Meeting**

**Monday, 11/10, 2014**

**Conference Room**

**Agenda**

***\*items in italics were submitted after the initial agenda was sent out***

Facilitator: Chip Rinehart Note taker: Laura Elliott Time keeper:

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| **Topic** | ‡**Notes** |
| **Old Business**  *\* These items under old business were not able to be discussed last month because of time constraints so they are carried over to the beginning of our next PAC Meeting* |  |
| Is 1st floor frosh the best idea?  Can we divide then onto different floors and have role models of more appropriate behavior?  Just an idea  *Concerning the “freshman hall” and other groupings of students.*  *Years ago this got really out of hand as well.  So students were assigned lockers and that seemed to take care of it.*  *I believe lockers were assigned outside your homeroom teachers room. Remember those?  That way we also sort of knew the students* | Are we content with the way the freshmen lockers assigned this year? They are currently arranged because of results from freshmen focus group. The students currently have choice which is nice and works well for freshmen. MBI can change if needed. Having freshmen away from seniors is good. The pros of having the students have choice seem greater than assigning lockers. |
| Homebound students and detention center students – we are being asked to develop alternative curriculum for these students and this is not possible in lab classes.  In past years the district had a tutor who would do an alternative curriculum and assign the grades.  What is the protocol for this? | A tutor is like a substitute teacher; the teacher supplies the lesson plans. It seems some tutors do not make contact with teachers. The school Social Worker makes homebound arrangements. There should be some clarification about the process and who to contact. Principal has requested contact to school at treatment facilities. School needs to provide alternative lessons when a lab class is being taken. If students are homebound for long term, and not IEP students, we often put them on 504 plans and drop lab type classes. |
| Clarification:  Yellow student absence forms are not used for school related / school sponsored activities, they are only used for personal or family related absences.  Clarification: Grade checks and extracurricular activity polices are being enforced for all activities, not just athletics. How do activities that are also taught in a “class” deal with their extracurricular activities.  Question:  Do we have policies on accepting late work and how much credit is given?  Is this a departmental decision or individual teacher decision? | If student is not academically eligible, they can’t participate. However in band situations like band practice and homecoming practice these are not treated like a competition. There seems to be a strange dynamic between music and MSHA sanctioned events were if you are not passing you can’t go. When the list comes out of students are attending, teachers can veto the student going. It is tough on teachers when they have to say “no” to an event because a student is failing their class. As far as athletes go, it is clear who can’t go; other activities have other guidelines. Sports are an afterschool activity, not curriculum. Competition value doesn’t seem fair when students are missing classes and failing; everyone should follow same guidelines for all activities. “Club” activities where the teacher receives a stipend, it doesn’t seem fair that they are practicing during the school day. Some schools have academic “good standing” where only those passing to a certain standing can go on field trips and other activities. If we did this, we would need standards on how often grades are checked and who checks these standards. It may not be obtainable to have same standard as MSHA, because the logistics of checking grades, conferencing with students, etc. In some schools this is determined in homeroom. Since we have a system in place, should it be carried out the same for all activities? There is not a policy for all activities only MSHA. The avenue of looking at this further could be a committee to meet and determine standards for staff to vote. Some members of PAC feel that extracurricular activities should be treated the same as sports. Field trips should be if you are not in good standing, you don’t get to go. If you ask Hallie, she can run an “F” list for field trips. Some departments have departmental policies and others are on a teacher to teacher basis. Moving on. |
| Unless the president starts talking louder, we might as well not have them announced.  I have asked the office 5 times now to ask her to speak louder.  Koppang comes through loud and clear but not her. | The PA system is the problem and it is different from room to room. Please move improving the PA system to the facility committee. |
| Another item:  The assembly schedule with having the pep assembly Block 7 is upsetting to many of the seniors as quite a few of them leave early during the day for work (business co-op) or have classes over at the UofM.  It is their senior year and they cannot participate in their last homecoming assembly.  NOT GOOD | With the Pep Assembly being in the afternoon, some classes had only half of the seniors returned being held after. This is on the plus/delta for the homecoming committee. |
| Will you please bring up:   1. Announcements need to be brief.  Students tune out, especially if the same announcement is read for 2-3 weeks, e.g. PSAT.  Reminders don’t need to be 2-3 sentences.   Hazing is against school policy.  Is it appropriate to announce that freshmen are required to bring paintbrushes to paint the swimming pool? That sounds like hazing | The swimming pool comment had gotten by the principal. It shouldn’t happen again.  Please keep announcements brief when submitting them to the bulletin. |
| What happened to MBI and positive, individual responses to student behavior?  Our policy lately this fall is back to being punitive.  If our goal is to keep kids in school, why are we punishing and pulling them out for ISS?  Something has changed…but is that change positive? | Please consult PAC facilitator for further information. |
| *Would it be possible for ODRs to be returned to teachers from the office?  We would like to be informed of outcomes and consequences that occur as a result of the ODRs we fill out.* | A copy is supposed to be returned to teachers. Principal will check into it. This may have been a problem that occurred when we went to the electronic system. |
| *I wonder if it would be possible to add some positive comments.*   * *I think Lisa’s “Principal’s Pen” is an* ***improvement in communication****.  It’s an effort!!* * ***Thanks to those teachers who volunteer to work with Sunshine Fund and Hellgate Cares****.  Could we please get their names so we know who to contact if we know of a student or staffer in need?* * *The coffee cart ladies contribute a lot of money to the departments.  If we ask them to adjust hours, we should do it gently and with* ***appreciation for all they do****…. and for the wonderful caffeine.* * *It may be mildly annoying to get commercial products, but I had a* ***student who appreciated the book bag.****And* ***we need these people for our mill levies and Business Academy.****Perhaps the inconvenience of a book bag or a mug or a pack of sticky notes is not too high a price to pay.* * *I really* ***appreciate the grade checks.****It reminds students of our academic priorities.* | PAC is in agreement to all positive comments. |
| *Can you please add parents in the staff lounge as well.  Twice this week there have been parents using that room 1.  for a phone call and 2. for a meeting of parents at coffee cart.* | Parents from coffee cart do a lot for the school; it would be uncomfortable to ask them not to. There is a KORT mailbox in there. Students can’t go in there because of HIPPA, should parents apply to this too? Parent space should be part of the school as well as a separate place for teachers. Principal will create a positive note for the teachers’ lounge to be for teachers only. KORT will be informed that they can reserve conference rooms. |
| **New Business** |  |
| Where are the administrators during 10 minute break? | The principal states she is usually in meetings and will check with the other two administrators to see where they are. |
| I don’t have a problem sending out grade distributions by class. I don’t have a problem with someone else running the report. The information should not be sent out by another teacher though, this should come from administration. | This is the TOSA data specialist’s job. |
| Is there going to be a my voice survey for staff? | Yes, the window opens soon. MBI staff time will be set aside for this. |
| Do we still do blue cards? | Yes, we still do blue cards. We need a refresher on this for all staff. A guest speaker on suicide awareness coming on Nov 20th and we will review blue card at that time. |
| This concern actually comes from a parent and I told her I would take it to PAC/our faculty for discussion. Below is a slightly edited letter she sent me.  The concern comes from, I think, a partial lack of communication between all of us—so that many areas of a student’s experience at Hellgate might cost extra money, but it does add up. Thanks!  My frustration is the result of four years of costs at Hellgate.  But, for example, if the band hadn't demanded $1,200 for its trip to Chicago, the IB and AP exam cost, or costs for sports and athletics traveling wouldn't have even made me blink. Luckily, I know that there are scholarships in place to help students with these kinds of costs, but I don’t know how many students feel comfortable asking.  For example, the band trip was said to be "optional." But in truth, a band needs all of its players, and there was no way I'd make xxxxxxxxx miss an opportunity that had been worked for.  I truly believe (and I'm thinking that most teachers do too) that school events/classes should be about inclusion. It would be so wonderful if kids fundraised for trips as a group effort-- if students raise money together, it's such a great message to them. The message would be: we work together to help each other, and we leave no one out. We don't exclude kids based on inability to pay. I tried to float this solution or raise the issue by calling and writing to administrators, teachers, both Hellgate principals, and school board members, but nothing worked. I was told to make XXXXXXXXX fundraise for four years to help pay for the trip, on her own, despite evenings and weekends needing to be used for schoolwork and activities she’s involved in. The costs also create stress on students. They might not want to burden their families and thus avoid things that end up costing money. | Some activities are very expensive, especially the band program. Traveling anywhere is expensive. Should there be more school fundraising? It is difficult raising funds and planning trips, so fundraising should be student driven? Do we need a fundraising coordinator? Parents can run fundraising groups?  We can’t request individuals to do fundraising. It is very time consuming. |
| 1. Still having problems with fidelity of no classroom interruption.   The office, techs, and PA announcements etc. have no respect for guest speakers or testing (IB)—they just interrupt despite notes on doors etc.  We need to have a policy that states we will only interrupt for emergency situations. 2. Senior group pictures should never be scheduled at the beginning of a period (it took 20 mins. Out of Period 2 this year) instead in should be scheduled at the end of the Period 4 like the last 5 minutes release seniors. | 2) It seems we are planning around being interrupted with individuals at the door delivering notes and checking attendance. Intercom interruptions should be minimal.  A refresher can be given to students who send out passes, but the message may need to be given by someone else? Office aids receive credit and they should be reminded on a regular basis to watch for signs on door, etc., and not to barge in.  3) It was different because the assembly schedule was different. |
| 1. Concern that other teachers/departments can create School Related Absences or Field Trips that override the needs of other areas of instruction, especially within 2 weeks of the end of a grading period. Extreme undo pressure on BOTH the student and the teacher of the classes missed.  Opinion: ALL field trips should NOT be required, and should be with the consent of all instructors involved. | See item 3.  Field trips are not allowed the week before finals as per faculty handbook.  Tabled. |
| The line for the water fountain at the north end of the 3rd floor is crazy at times.  Maybe we need more of these water bottle fountains in order to ease the crowding in one spot. | Class funds have been donated a fourth water fountain. There are three in building, but one is broken. Principal will find out how much it would be to get it fixed. |
| Please do not send students to the office to make a large number of copies.  Please use the print shop as much as possible.  We know that students are not allowed in the staff lounge and, therefore they have to come to the office.  As long as it is only a few copies, no problem, but when the machine is tied up for a long period of time, it hinders our ability to perform our jobs efficiently. | Office staff and Teachers need to stand up and tell students they need to use it. |